

REMARKS

Applicant notes that, although the examiner stated in the office action mailed 5/18/2005, that the office action is responsive to communications filed on 10 March 2005, the USPTO date stamp on applicant's reply to the restriction requirement is March 2, 2005 (not March 10, 2005).

In the Office Action mailed 5/18/2005, claims 1-3, 8-10, and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Bowen (U.S. Patent No. 5,485,866). Additionally, claims 6, 16, and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Bowen, or alternatively, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Bowen. Further, claims 7 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bowen in view of Wilkinson (U.S. Patent No. 1,193,744). Also, claims 13-15, 17-18, 28, and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bowen in view of Kirby (U.S. Patent No. 3,984,877). Still further, claims 19-20 and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bowen in view of Crowne (U.S. Patent No. 5,814,830). Page 1 of the office action also states that claim 22 is rejected, but the office action does not state the basis for the rejection.

In the office action, the examiner also stated, "Claims 4-5, 11, 21, 23-25, 29 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims."

In this amendment, applicant has amended claims 1-2, 4, 6-8, 10-14, 17-19, and 21-31, and has canceled claims 32-44. Support for the amendments can be found in the specification, for example, on page 11, lines 1-12, in Fig. 4, and in the originally presented claims. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-31 are now pending in the application.

As mentioned above, in the office action the examiner stated that claims 4-5, 11, 21, 23-25 and 29 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Herein applicant has amended claims 4, 11, 21, 23-25 and 29 in accordance with the examiner's suggestion, so that claims 4-5, 11, 21, 23-25 and 29 as amended, include all of the limitations of the base

claim and any intervening claims. Claim 5 did not require amendment, because claim 5 is dependent upon claim 4, and claim 4 has been amended to be in the form that the examiner stated would be allowable. In view of the amendments herein, in accordance with the examiner's statement in the office action, claims 4-5, 11, 21, 23-25 and 29 as amended, should be allowable. As mentioned above, applicant has also amended some of the other pending claims. Some of the dependent claims were amended to change the number of the independent claim that the dependent claim is dependent upon, and those amendments were not made for reasons related to the patentability of the claims, but rather were made to specify independent claims preferred by the applicant. As a result of the claim amendments, claims 4, 11, 21, 23-25 and 29 are the only independent claims remaining in the application, and each pending dependent claim is dependent upon one of the claims that the examiner stated would be allowable (claims 4-5, 11, 21, 23-25 and 29). Additionally, applicant has cancelled claims 32-44, which had been withdrawn. Consequently applicant submits that all of the pending claims should be allowable. In conclusion, applicant respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance, and requests allowance of the application.

Respectfully submitted,



Timothy N. Ellis
Reg. No. 41,734
Attorney for Applicant
telephone (858)455-7977